

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure,
said container having an outlet passage through which
inflation fluid flows from said container;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container
and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

E1
a support for said rupturable closure member
defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member,
said rupturable closure member having a first portion spaced
from an open first end of said support prior to said inflation
fluid being introduced into said container, said first portion
being deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the
inflation fluid when introduced into said container, said
rupturable closure member having a second ring-shaped portion
encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, ruptures said
closure member by shearing said first portion from said second
portion.

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~~15.~~ (Amended) An apparatus comprising:

E2
an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for
inflation between a vehicle occupant and a side structure of
the vehicle;

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure
for inflating said inflatable vehicle occupant protection
device, said container having an outlet passage through which
inflation fluid flows from said container toward said vehicle
occupant protection device;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

Q2 a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion spaced from an open first end of said support prior to said inflation fluid being introduced into said container, said first portion being deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid when introduced into said container, said rupturable closure member having a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, ruptures said closure member by shearing said first portion from said ring-shaped portion.

Please add new claims 37-44 as follows:

37 ~~30~~ An apparatus for providing inflation fluid to inflate an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said apparatus comprising:

Q3 a container storing inflation fluid under pressure, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a

second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, shears said first portion from said second portion, said inflation fluid acting on said second portion and causing said second portion to petal away from said support and open said passage to provide a flow of inflation fluid from said container through said passage.

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~~30~~. An apparatus for providing inflation fluid to inflate an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said apparatus comprising:

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber, said rupturable closure member having a third portion encircling said second portion and further including a connection between said third portion and said container; and

an initiator which, when actuated, ruptures said closure member by shearing said first portion from said second portion.

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~~32~~. An apparatus for providing inflation fluid to inflate an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said apparatus comprising:

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container;

E3
a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, produces combustion gasses and a shock wave, said combustion gasses and said shock wave acting on said first portion to shear said first portion from said second portion.

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~~33~~. An apparatus comprising:
an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for inflation between a vehicle occupant and a side structure of the vehicle;

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure for inflating said inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container toward said vehicle occupant protection device;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

43 a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, shears said first portion from said second portion, said inflation fluid acting on said second portion and causing said second portion to petal away from said support and open said passage to provide a flow of inflation fluid from said container through said passage.

34
41. An apparatus comprising:

an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for inflation between a vehicle occupant and a side structure of the vehicle;

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure for inflating said inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said container having an outlet passage through which

inflation fluid flows from said container toward said vehicle occupant protection device;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

43 a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber, said rupturable closure member having a third portion encircling said second portion and further including a connection between said third portion and said container; and

an initiator which, when actuated, ruptures said closure member by shearing said first portion from said ring-shaped portion.

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~~44~~ An apparatus comprising:

an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for inflation between a vehicle occupant and a side structure of the vehicle;

a container storing inflation fluid under pressure for inflating said inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container toward said vehicle occupant protection device;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

a support for said rupturable closure member defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, produces combustion gasses and a shock wave, said combustion gasses and said shock wave acting on said first portion to shear said first portion from said second portion.

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13. An apparatus for providing inflation fluid to inflate an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said apparatus comprising:

E3
a container storing inflation fluid under pressure, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

a support for said rupturable closure member, said support including a side wall having an inner surface and an opposite outer surface, said inner surface defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, ruptures said closure member by shearing said first portion from said second portion, said inflation fluid flowing around said support adjacent said outer surface and through said outlet passage when said closure member is ruptured.

³⁷
44. An apparatus comprising:

an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for inflation between a vehicle occupant and a side structure of the vehicle;

E3
a container storing inflation fluid under pressure for inflating said inflatable vehicle occupant protection device, said container having an outlet passage through which inflation fluid flows from said container toward said vehicle occupant protection device;

a rupturable closure member fixed to said container and blocking flow of inflation fluid through said passage;

a support for said rupturable closure member, said support including a side wall having an inner surface and an opposite outer surface, said inner surface defining a chamber adjacent said rupturable closure member, said rupturable closure member having a first portion deformed into said chamber by the pressure of the inflation fluid and a second ring-shaped portion encircling said first portion outside of said chamber; and

an initiator which, when actuated, ruptures said closure member by shearing said first portion from said second portion, said inflation fluid flowing around said support

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EB adjacent said outer surface and through said outlet passage
when said closure member is ruptured.